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This study examined different perceptions of junior college environment among administrators, faculty in transfer and in vocational programs, and transfer and vocational students. In a college of 1500 students. In a college of 1500 students (51% in vocational programs, 49% in transfer), 50 were randomly selected from each group. All 30 transfer faculty, 27 vocational faculty, and 12 administrators were included. The test used was Pace's College and University Environment Scales, with 150 true-false statements on all aspects of college life. Its five scales describe a college climate: Practicality, Community, Awareness, Propriety, Scholarship. All possible between-group comparisons were made on each scale, except for comparing academic and vocational faculty with each other's students. Among the many findings were: Awareness was ranked highest by four groups and second only by the vocational students; for all groups, Practicality, Awareness, and Scholarship were highest and Propriety lowest; Community was Lowest for all except administrators; academic and vocational students differed greatly only on Practicality; Practicality ranked second in three groups, first in one, and third in another. After discussing their implications, the author suggested two ways to use the findings: (1) to achieve a more harmonious campus, after analysis by faculty, administration, and students; and (2) to enable high school students to select the college most appropriate for them. (HH)

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A COMPARISON OF STUDENT, TEACHER, AND ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS OF THE JUNIOR COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

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A most popular area of recent research in student personnel work has been the characterization and assessment of the four year college and university environment. A review of the literature, however, reveals a paucity of studies concerning the assessment of the jr. college environment. Gelso and Sims (1968) conducted a study at a state coeducational jr. college in the south, which provides impetus for further study of the two year college environment. Their study was designed to determine if there were differences among commuter students, resident students and faculty members. Their findings indicate that the perceptions of the faculty and student groups were generally similar. The purpose of this investigation was to determine if there were differences in perception of a junior college environment among (a) administrators, (b) faculty teaching transfer courses, (c) students majoring in transfer programs, (d) faculty teaching vocational-technical courses, and (e) students majoring in vocational technical programs.

Method

Subjects

The subjects were drawn from a mountain states community college with an enrollment of approximately 1500 students. Fifty-one percent of the students were majoring in a vocational-technical program and 49

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percent in a transfer program. Samples of 50 students each were randomly selected from the two groups. All faculty and administrators were included in the study because of their relatively small number. There were 30 transfer faculty, 27 vocational-technical faculty and 12 administrators.

The Instrument

The research was conducted by administering the College and University Environment Scales (CUES). This standardized instrument is authored by C. Robert Pace and published by the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey. The CUES consists of 150 true-false statements about college life. As outlined by Pace (1963), this includes features and facilities of the campus, rules and regulations, faculty, curricula, instruction and examinations, student life, extra-curricular organizations, and other aspects of the institutional enviroment which help to define the atmosphere or intellectual-social-cultural-climate of the college.

The CUES yields five scales to indicate the environmental press of the college.

1. Practicality - This scale suggests a practical, instrumental emphasis in the college environment.
2. Community - This scale describes a friendly, cohesive, group oriented campus. There is a feeling of group welfare and group loyalty which encompasses the college as a whole.
3. Awareness - This scale reflects a concern and emphasis upon three sorts of meaning - personal, poetic and political.

4. Propriety - This scale suggests an environment that is polite and considerate. Group standards of decorum are important.
5. Scholarship - This scale reflects an emphasis on high academic achievement and a serious interest in scholarship.

Data Analysis

Pace (1963) recommends the 66 plus method of scoring i.e. A statement is considered characteristic of the institution when 66 percent or more of the respondents answer it in the direction of the key.

The 66 plus method of scoring does not readily lend itself to between-groups signifance tests, since it yields only a single score for each group on each scale. The purpose of this study was to make comparisons between selected campus groups so the investigator decided to use a standard methods for between groups comparisons. The t test for differences between independent sample means was used. This method was used by Berdie (1968). The significance level for all tests was .05.

The general null hypothesis to be tested was that there are no significant differences in perceptions of the junior college environment by the previously mentioned groups. All possible between-groups comparison on each scale were made with the exceptions that academic faculty were not compared with vocational students and vocational faculty were not compared with transfer students.

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Insert Table 1 about here

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Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for each group on each CUES scale. Although there were differences in the magnitude of the means, the relative rank order of the scales is quite similar for all groups. The Awareness Scale was ranked highest by all groups except vocational students who ranked it second below Practicality dimension. For all groups, Practicality, Awareness, and Scholarship were the highest scales and Propriety and Community were the lowest. All groups, except administrators, rated the Community dimension lowest.

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Insert Table 2 about here

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Table 2 presents the t-ratios for the comparisons of administrators with all groups on each CUES scale. Significant differences at the .05 level were found between administrators and academic faculty on all five scales. The comparison between administrators and academic students yielded significant t-ratios on all scales except Propriety. Administrators and vocational faculty did not differ significantly on any of the five scales. Differences were found between administrators and vocational students on the Awareness and Scholarship dimensions.

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Insert Table 3 about here

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The findings in Table 3 show that significant differences exist between academic and vocational faculty on all scales except Practicality. Table 3 further shows that the only scale on which academic and vocational students differ significantly is Practicality. No significant differences in perception of the community college environment were found between academic faculty and academic students. When the vocational faculty were compared with the vocational students the *t*-ratios were significant on the Community, Awareness, and Scholarship Scales.

Discussion and Implications

The results of this study pose some interesting questions and provide some rather surprising results. Gelso and Sims (1968) found Awareness to be ranked lowest by Residents, Commuters and Faculty, while this study showed it to be ranked highest by all groups except one and it was ranked second high by that group. This result seems to belie the stereotype of the typical community college environment, while the fact that Practicality was ranked second by three groups, first by one and third by another, would seem to support the stereotype. This also indicates that knowing the right people, being in the right groups, and doing what is expected is an important characteristic of this environment (Pace, 1963).

It is also interesting to note that the Community Scale was ranked lowest by all groups except administrators, who ranked it next to lowest. One of the strongest selling points of the community college has been the Community Scale i.e. small classes, individual attention, availa-

bility of faculty, and, in general, a friendly, group-oriented campus where the environment is supportive and sympathetic. It would seem pertinent to begin an administrator-faculty-student dialogue to determine why the Community dimension is not perceived to be highly characteristic of this environment.

The between group comparisons also yield some areas for question e.g. why the complete disparity of perception of the environment between administrators and academic faculty and the lack of disparity between administrators and vocational faculty? Since the total group would not be so large as to be unwieldy, the noted differences might be appropriate topics for discussion in a meeting that included all faculty and administrators.

Though we often think there is a wide difference in the way vocational and academic students view the environment, they differed significantly only on the Practicality Scale. It is notable that there were differences on three scales, Community, Awareness, and Scholarship, between vocational faculty and vocational students, while no differences were found between academic faculty and vocational students.

In summary, the results of this study could be utilized in two ways.

1. To serve as a base point for dialogue among faculty, students, and administrators to analyze the differences in perception of the environment so that a more harmonious functioning of the total college could be achieved.
2. To serve as pertinent information for high school students in the process of choosing a college that will best meet their needs.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of the

Administrators, Academic Faculty, Vocational Faculty,

Academic Students and Vocational Students on the Five CUES Scales

		Scale									
		Practicality		Community		Awareness		Propriety		Scholarship	
Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Administrators	12	17.92	2.68	14.25	6.22	20.67	3.80	13.25	4.67	17.25	4.81
Academic Faculty	30	15.13	3.14	9.23	5.48	16.43	3.82	9.83	3.99	13.03	4.80
Academic Students	50	14.16	2.84	10.20	4.28	15.24	3.08	10.60	4.12	13.70	4.55
Vocational Faculty	27	16.07	3.64	14.89	6.77	19.70	4.49	15.52	7.23	17.15	4.67
Vocational Students	50	15.90	3.72	11.72	5.61	15.62	4.72	12.60	5.99	13.52	4.59

Table 2

t-Ratios for the Comparison of

Administrators with all Groups on each CUES Scale

	Scale t-ratios				
Group	Practicality	Community	Awareness	Propriety	Scholarship
Administrators Academic Faculty	2.70*	2.58*	3.25*	2.39*	2.57*
Administrators Academic Students	4.16*	2.68*	5.24*	1.95	2.40*
Administrators Vocational Faculty	1.57	-.28	.65	-.99	.06
Administrators Vocational Students	1.77	1.37	3.44*	.35	2.51*

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 3

t-Ratios for the Faculty and Student Comparisons

	Scale t-ratios				
Group	Practicality	Community	Awareness	Propriety	Scholarship
Academic Faculty / Academic Students	1.43	-.88	1.55	-.82	-.62
Vocational Faculty / Vocational Students	.20	2.20*	3.69*	1.90	3.29*
Academic Faculty / Vocational Faculty	-1.05	-3.48*	-2.97*	-3.72*	-3.27*
Academic Students / Vocational Students	-2.63*	-1.52	-.48	-1.95	.20

*Significant at the .05 level

References

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